

## Diversity Makes the Difference! *Why Women are Good for Corporations*

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Women benefit corporations at all levels of the business. A recent study revealed a striking statistic: Fortune 500 companies with the highest representation of women in senior positions yield 35% higher return on equity and 34% higher total return to shareholders. Clearly, women are impacting companies in positive and lucrative ways, but what exactly do they bring to the table that makes them strong leaders and results in improved profitability?

The answer may be explained in terms of social differences and certain inherent strengths that are beneficial in managing employees and solving problems. Of the two genders, women tend to highlight relationships and communication in managing their employees, and as a result, employees feel valued and inspired by their managers and produce better work. (In fact, in one recent study, women scored higher than men in 42 out of 52 leadership skills surveyed.) Research has shown that women tend to exhibit the following social strengths:

- Women are greater nurturers—they are willing to nurture not only people, but projects, through rough times.
- Women encourage openness among their employees, and make themselves very accessible.
- Women are fabulous multi-taskers.
- Women focus on relationship and tend to create lasting bonds and build bigger networks. They also express appreciation often.
- As leaders, women respond quickly when assistance is required.
- Women are tolerant of differences in others.
- Women can identify problems quickly.
- Women are great communicators—and, consequently, open to extended discussion when trying to solve problems.
- Women are flexible and willing to explore compromises.
- Women ask questions, and are able to assess quickly the needs of others.
- Women delegate responsibilities readily.
- Women focus on the company as a whole, rather than personal gains.

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